

# **Internet Access to Caribbean Government Information on Homeschooling: A Preliminary Case Study of Barbados**

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## **Abstract**

This article reports on a preliminary study investigating access to government information obtainable on the Internet about homeschooling in Barbados. Barbados has one of the highest Internet usage in the English-speaking Caribbean and ranks high in the region in e-government services. As such, a search query aimed at obtaining government information on homeschooling in Barbados was conducted of both Government Web sites and a popular search engine. The central issue was whether there was access to government information on legally homeschooling in Barbados. The study utilized a qualitative approach to analysing and studying the information sources retrieved from the search results of the top ten sources retrieved from an Internet search as well as the results from the Government portals and websites. The findings indicate gaps in Barbadian government information availability and dissemination via Internet on homeschooling that restrict citizens from accessing information for legal homeschooling. It also reveals that gaps in the government provided information is filled by non-government providers on the Internet including those that provide inaccurate information to the public.

## **Introduction**

In an era of almost ubiquitous Internet access, there are expectations that governments should create and maintain Web sites and Web pages that publish, share, and deliver information and even application forms for government services to citizens. Such practices by government entities are referred to in the scholarly literature as e-government. According to Fay Durrant, e-government aims “to provide all citizens with an efficient and alternative medium for accessing public services and for interacting with public sector agencies” (1). Further, the “Internet is an important vehicle” for “e-government products and services” with the potential for “electronic networking to make information and services available to the general public” (Durrant 2).

One important gap in information provided by many governments to citizens is information pertaining to educating children at home, otherwise known as homeschooling. Homeschooling defined by Brian Ray is “education for children and youth...based mainly in the home and...directed by their parents” who assume the major “responsibility for and authority over their children's education and training” instead of “sending them away to classroom institutions where their education would be controlled and conducted largely by nonfamily state or private teachers”. Several researchers note the need for relevant government information and materials for homeschoolers via the Internet (Jamaludin et al. 118; Kormaz and Duman 3895). Consequently, disseminating government information to homeschoolers can take the form of government agencies creating homeschooling informational webpages and delivering national educational curricula via the Internet.

This article reports on a preliminary study investigating access to government information obtainable on the Internet about homeschooling in Barbados. Barbados has one of the highest Internet usage in the English-speaking Caribbean and ranks high in the region in e-government services. The UN E-Government Survey 2016 ranked Barbados within the top 10 countries for e-government in the Americas and the only Caribbean country within that top 10. In addition, Barbados ranked 54th in the global e-government ranking that assesses the diffusion of ICTs in public administration institutions of various national governments (“UN E-Government Survey 2016”). Given Barbados’s high regional ranking in developments towards e-government, it would be expected that Barbados would be an exemplary case of how Caribbean governments are providing information on homeschooling that would be accessible via either its government Internet portal (<http://www.gov.bb/>) or via a search of popular Search Engines. Also, given Barbados’s highly Internet connected population with 78.5% Internet users (Miniwatt Marketing Group), the case for Barbados providing homeschooling information via the Internet is greater than most Caribbean states. Barbados’ high e-government score and Internet usage rate combined makes Barbados the ideal case to study the phenomenon of Internet access to government information on homeschooling in the Caribbean.

## **Literature Review**

The Internet and information and communication technologies (ICTs) offer great possibilities for homeschooling and for state support to homeschoolers. The literature suggests that homeschoolers may benefit from, use, and seek homeschool information provided by the Government via the Internet. Several observe that homeschoolers rely on information-rich resources like the Internet (Kunzman and Gaither 15) or that homeschool educators use computers and the Internet for instruction, materials, and curricula (Hanna 621- 622).

However, the literature also reveals the theme of government preference for publicly controlled education and unpreparedness to relinquish such control even in an era where governments can deliver educational curricula via the Internet.

For instance, Brian Ray notes tension between facilitating homeschooling and the state's preference for controlled public education of children and youth (337-338). Opponents of homeschooling support state controlled education to shape children's worldviews aligned more with the state than their parents (B. Ray "Homeschooling Associated" 337-338). Robert Kunzman and Milton Gaither, on the other hand, identify homeschooling as illegal in some states like Germany and find that even states permitting homeschooling are criticized for homeschooling legislation and policies (34-35). Luciane Barbosa observes that the increasing number of Brazilian families practicing homeschooling are igniting controversies regarding the right to homeschool in the midst of lawsuits and truancy regulations (356-357). These reveal emerging legal and political challenges regarding homeschooling (Barbosa 361-362).

Interestingly, despite recent controversies and legal battles between the state and homeschooling families, homeschooling did not originate in the twenty-first century. From as far back as 1642, homeschooling was encouraged by American court and town officials when "Massachusetts general court directed town selectmen to encourage parents to teach their children in an early form of homeschooling" (Schafer). But with compulsory public education legislation, homeschooling seemingly receded underground until the 1960s (Chapman). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, homeschooling parents seemingly require awareness of local legislation within their state to avoid lawsuits.

Despite the international growing and emerging interest in and scholarship on homeschooling (Kunzman and Gaither 8; Jamaludin et al. 111), available Caribbean homeschooling research appears non-existent. Online searches yield zero homeschooling research within English-speaking Caribbean territories. Yet, Caribbean media, since 2010, include newspaper, magazine articles, blogs, and other online websites, reporting on homeschooling and on narratives of homeschoolers ("Homeschooling."; Coombs). In 2011, the then Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Rt. Hon. Andrew Holness attracted public criticisms for homeschooling (Douglas). In 2016, Barbados Ministry of Education sued Rastafarian parents for illegal homeschooling ("Jones Rubbishes Claims"). These latter high-profile cases illustrate controversies surrounding homeschooling in the English-Speaking Caribbean and the need for exploration of the topic.

## **Background**

Interest in this study originated after the recent controversial Barbadian Government's lawsuit of Rastafarian parents for illegal homeschooling. According to the media reports,

*During the hearing a school attendance officer from the ministry ... testified that neither child could be found on "any school registry in Barbados" as their parents were simply not interested in enrolling them in the public school system or following the home schooling criteria... ("Jones Rubbishes Claims").*

The Ministry was reported as willing to work with parents desirous of homeschooling once the right protocol is followed.

*“Speak to the ministry. Permissions are granted for parents to homeschool but they have to follow the curriculum. Remember we have a compulsory system of education. We recognize the right of parents to want to homeschool. You could be Christian, Rastafarian, etc; if you go and try to sidetrack the [laws]...we can’t allow that because every child has the right to be educated.*

*“If parents want to homeschool their child, come and speak to us and be granted permission in writing. Those parents are also visited routinely to ensure that they are following a curriculum that we can add to the child overall,” ... (“Jones Rubbishes Claims”)*

While in this media report the Minister outlines the protocol for parents to follow in homeschooling, it appears that the Barbadian Government restricts parental access to homeschooling information to those who personally visit the Ministry or telephone. The protocol reported is to “[s]peak to the Ministry” or “come and speak to us” (“Jones Rubbishes Claims”), implying preference for oral/telephone communication within the confines of a physical building. Such a practice seems archaic in an era of almost ubiquitous Internet access, where citizens may expect governments to share and deliver information through the Internet.

Further analysis reveals that this restriction to oral face to face/telephone communication at the Ministry is not specified in the 1997 *Barbados Education Act*. Analysis of the 1997 *Barbados Education Act* confirms legal provision for homeschooling. In ss42(1), homeschooling or exemption from compulsory school attendance is provided on a long-term basis on the grounds of:

- a) *the child is receiving special education*
- b) *the child is receiving instruction at home in manner and to a standard satisfactory to the Minister;*
- c) *the child is unable to attend school because of sickness, danger of infection, infirmity, sudden or serious illness of a parent, or other sufficient cause.*

Given this legal provision, homeschooling is subject to the Minister’s approval and satisfaction. Barbadian legislation further specifies in ss 42(2) that the parent seeking homeschooling approval should communicate to the Ministry to obtain permission, which is either approved or denied pending the Ministry review of the parent’s application (*Barbados Education Act* 24). Despite this clarity, two things are ambiguous:

1. How does a parent communicate and apply for a certificate of approval for homeschooling?
2. What are the standards of homeschooling that will satisfy the Minister or the Chief Education Officer to approve one's application?

Given these questions arising from reading the Barbadian education legislation on homeschooling, the researcher investigated publicly available sources of information accessible to citizens of Barbados to resolve the above questions that possibly reflect an information need of a Barbadian parent in deciding to homeschool.

## **Methodology**

This study's underline objective was to investigate access to government information obtainable on the Internet about homeschooling in Barbados. The study utilized a qualitative approach to analysing and studying the information sources retrieved from the search results of the top ten sources retrieved from Internet search as well as the results obtained from the Government portals and websites. The study's exploratory case study qualitative research design involved:

1. Formulating queries aimed at obtaining government information sources on homeschooling in Barbados.
2. Conducting search queries into the Barbados Government Information portal, the Barbados Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation's Website and Google search engine.
3. Analyzing, comparing, and contrasting the top ten search results retrieved to address the main research objective of examining the information obtainable via the Internet on homeschooling. (See Appendix A)

It was expected that Barbados Government Information portal and the Ministry's website, would be the first credible sources to provide information on the topic. The Barbados Government Information portal is considered "a convenient one-stop shop where people can locate the latest government news, information and policies, as well as all online services" ("UN E-Government Survey 2016" 119).

Meanwhile, since the Barbadian Education Act specifies the conditions for homeschooling, it was expected that the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation's Website would be the Website to get information pertaining to homeschooling queries.

For both sites, the researcher inputted the following keywords in their search options:

- Homeschool
- Homeschooling
- Home education
- Home school
- Home schooling

The researcher also conducted online search of a major popular search engine with the natural language search utilizing the search statement "ministry of education Barbados homeschooling" to identify available sources. The researcher used "ministry of education Barbados" to help to restrict the search to Barbadian government information. Two other search strategies using Google Advanced search with limits to content from the Barbados region and with limits to content from the Barbados region and to .gov sites retrieved no results.

The researcher's analysis of the availability and accessibility of government information was guided and undertaken from the disciplinary perspective of library and information science, and the sub-field of online searching and information retrieval. According to Jansen and Rieh, in information retrieval, the construct of *information obtainability* assumes that the more information is accessible "the more likely...people will use that information" (1522). This idea is also related to Zipf's law that postulates that when solving problems, a person tends to use the least amount of effort in interacting with a retrieval system to locate desired content (Jansen and Rieh 1522). A related construct is the concept of information provision where the assumption is that providing information is beneficial to the user in accomplishing a certain task (Jansen and Rieh 1522). Using these theoretical propositions, the assumptions guiding the study were that:

1. Barbadian government information on homeschooling via the Internet would be beneficial to citizens deciding to homeschool.
2. the more accessible Barbadian government information on homeschooling is via the Internet, the more likely citizens will be able to use that information.
3. persons seeking Barbadian government information on homeschooling via the Internet will use the least amount of effort to locate that information and will possibly not go beyond the first page of search engine results.

Given these propositions, the researcher also analysed the non-Government sources retrieved within the top ten Web search results over a period of 3 months beginning October 2016 and the interpretations and the data were presented to other scholars for member checking.

## Presentation and Discussion of Results

The results of this investigation reveal gaps in online government information obtainability on homeschooling. Despite leading the Commonwealth Caribbean in e-government services, the Government of Barbados does not supply either relevant or adequate information on the Internet regarding homeschooling. Both the Barbados Government Information Portal and the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation’s websites returned zero relevant results in response to inputted terms. The official Government of Barbados’ Ministry of Education Science and Technology’s website, while returning no information or source relevant to answering the query of the legal process for home schooling (See Table 1), retrieved 3 to 4 results respectively for “home school” and “home education”. These irrelevant results mentioned “home economics”, the partnership between school, home, and community or defined early childhood as the care of children, by persons who are not related, outside of the home.

*Table 1 Search query results from Barbados’ Ministry of Education Science and Technology’s website*

<b>Keyword</b>	<b>No. of Documents Retrieved</b>	<b>No. of Relevant Documents Retrieved</b>	<b>No. of Documents Useful to Information Need</b>
<i>Homeschool</i>	0	0	0
<i>Homeschooling</i>	0	0	0
<i>Home education</i>	4	0	0
<i>Home school</i>	3	0	0
<i>Home schooling</i>	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

While persons could use the “contact” option on Government websites to access additional information on homeschooling, the absence of published information on the topic forces citizens interested in the topic to communicate with the Ministry in an archaic manner despite its online presence and ability to deliver curricula via ICTs.

The Government of Barbados' lack of online information for homeschooling is not unusual when compared to other nation states. Previous studies discovered a need from Turkish homeschoolers for government websites to support homeschooling parents and students (Kormaz and Doman 3895). Further, even international intergovernmental organizations of states such as the United Nations sparsely document homeschooling. The researcher's online search of the UN website retrieved five documents mentioning the term ("UN Enterprise Search"). None of these documentations provide extensive treatment but brief or casual mentions of the term.

However, since one would expect the Ministry to publish the answers to frequently asked queries online, the absence of homeschooling information on the Barbadian Government's websites possibly conveys insignificant interest by citizens in the topic. Yet, insignificant interest by citizens is not substantiated when one considers the following 2013 news article excerpt:

There is an increasing interest by Barbadian parents to homeschool their children.

This was revealed by Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Senator Harry Husbands, ... after a tour of Wills Primary School....

"I gather from informal discussions with officials in the Ministry that homeschooling is on the rise in Barbados and that there are an increasing number – that does not mean that there are a large number, but there are an increasing number of parents who are opting for homeschooling."

He said that this can present a challenge in that the Ministry is quite busy overseeing the government and private schools and homeschooling presents additional educational places that they would have to look out for. However, if this is something that parents want, then the Ministry is willing to lend their support.

"It presents a challenge for the Ministry in terms of supervision. The Ministry is challenged dealing with all of the government primary and secondary; schools in the private sector, both primary and secondary; and then the addition of homeschooling does represent a challenge at this time, but I think that it is a challenge that we will have to change to meet. If that is the option that is wanted by an increasing number of parents, so be it. All they have to do is the necessary work and so on, so that the children don't end up suffering." (Thangaraj).



Here, it is evident that unavailable information from official sources is the result of the inconvenience of giving oversight to “additional educational places...” (Thangaraj). As a result, while a leader in e-government in the region, the Barbadian Government appears unprepared to publish information on homeschooling and willing to tightly monitor and regulate access to legal homeschooling information. As a result, citizens accessing the information must contact the Ministry privately, rather than accessing publicly supplied information online. This approach restricting homeschooling information access, however, has negative consequences as gaps left by the Ministry in providing this information online are filled by non-government providers. In the ensuing report of results from analysis, two exceptional cases are discussed and analysed in thick descriptive details, one provides accurate information, Bajan Mom and the other supplies inaccurate information to the public, namely the case of TripAdvisor.

## **The Case of Bajan Mom**

The Bajan Mom blog, described as a “site for making transition to Barbados easier”, provides a blog post with rich and informative conversational exchange between the information provider, an ordinary citizen and temporary immigrant, and the information seeker, an apparent immigrant. The information provided in this source seemed exceptionally accurate and illustrative of a case where ordinary citizens share government information with others. In this case, Bajan Mom receives and posts the following query from an information seeker with the initials H.W. along with the blogger’s response:

*Q: Hey... I wanted to know if you knew anything about the homeschooling process in Barbados. I know that it is accepted, but I am unsure as to what the procedure is [sentence omitted]... I have been home schooling my 2 children since that time and believe in the parents right to provide the best education possible for their child.*

*...[Sentences omitted] Do you know of the procedure that I have to go through in order to do so.*

*I think such a program will be highly beneficial for parents in Barbados most schools are overcrowded and teachers are overworked. – H.W. [EXCERPT]*

*A: Dear H.W.,*

*Thank you for your question. There are many variables which may impact whether you may be able to continue the curriculum you outlined, one of which is the length of time that you plan to spend in Barbados.*

*If your children are to sit any of our national or regional examinations, it may be in their interests to follow the appropriate curricula which lead to those certificates. Your best recourse is to contact the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation at [contact phone number and email omitted], if you want specifics.*

*Generically speaking, however, I do have some information for you. In order for a child to be home schooled in Barbados, one must write a letter, asking for permission, addressed to:*

*The Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation  
Elsie Payne Complex  
St. Michael  
Barbados, W.I.*

*In this letter you need to:*

*Give the reason why your children are to be homeschooled,  
Include your children's names, dates of birth and any previous schools that they attended,  
Provide the curriculum to be used for the Ministry's perusal,  
Provide the qualifications of those who will tutor your child, whether it be you or someone you hire.  
I hope that you find this information to be helpful and I wish you all the best in your planned transition.  
Best regards,  
Bajan Mom*

The Bajan Mom case exhibits that in the absence of government information providers, ordinary citizens supply information on the homeschooling process in Barbados. This information provision is facilitated through free online platforms like blogs that afford ease of creating and publishing content. Spurred by someone responding to her invitation to submit questions about living in Barbados, the Bajan Mom blogger publishes a post with highly relevant information about Barbados' legal homeschooling process.

Bajan Mom's information provision contrasts with the Ministry's social media presence (a Facebook page, Twitter account and a YouTube Channel). A check of the Ministry's Facebook page reveals no publicly posted question by members of the public, while its Twitter page contained zero tweets as of the date of this study.

Further, while these social media sites provide opportunities for interactivity including asking the Ministry questions, observation of the sites reveal no questions about homeschooling nor official information posted about the topic. While such questions or interactions could be exchanged as private messages between the Ministry and the social media visitor, the Ministry is yet to publicly post on homeschooling via social media.

Bajan Mom, while providing the government information, advises her reader, H.W., “to contact” the Ministry for specifics, providing both phone number and email contact. Here Bajan Mom refers not to the Ministry’s social media pages, but to traditional communication of phone and email. Yet the problems of telephone communication is evident in H.W.’s response to Bajan Mom’s post.

*Hi, thanks for you reply.*

*[2 paragraphs omitted]*

*I did call the Ministry, and was told that the one person working in the homeschooling section would be on vacation till September. Wonderful timing!! Who ever answered the phone told me to go ahead with homeschooling my kids and put in my request in September.*

H.W., who contacted the Ministry for specifics, encounters the barrier to access posed by the Ministry official responsible being on vacation leave. The information is thus not accessible at the time that the user wants it.

In addition, H. W. provides further questioning about what she determines to be unclear about the process:

*I understand the need for all the above procedures except the last. What is needed to be qualified to teach a grade 1 or kindergarten student. As a mother I am the educator of my children. I teach them social , moral, and ethical values. And when they bring home homework from school which they didn’t understand or the teacher could explain in a way that engaged them, I teach it and complete the homework.*

*I have even looked into what it would take for me to obtain a teaching certificate in Barbados, and let me tell you; it is backwards. Basically, you have to be a teacher in order to get a teaching certificate. .lol*

Bajan Mom responds:

*Hello Heather. I understand your concerns. From what I understand, once you can show that you have qualifications beyond the curriculum you teach, you should be fine. So if you are teaching elementary school, you should have graduated high school; if you are teaching a secondary school curriculum, you should have a college degree and so on and so forth.*

*Of course, as I mentioned in my original response, feel free to contact the Ministry of Education to have your concerns addressed. Thus far, I have found the education officers to be most helpful.*

The above case reveals opportunities for government institution to use blog-like communication and other social media tools to supply information to users, especially in ways facilitating conversational exchange. Even with published content on a blog or website, readers may want clarifications. While users can use telephone, telephone communication restricts users to contacting the information provider at a specific building during opening hours. In addition, phone contact does not guarantee the availability of the information provider to speak to the information seeker.

## **The Case of Inaccurate Information on Tripadvisor**

One danger of nongovernmental information providers is that they might provide inaccurate, outdated, or misleading information. A page on TripAdvisor is included and analysed in this study as an exceptional case of this blatantly inaccurate information on homeschooling in Barbados.

According to its About Page, TripAdvisor is described as “the world's largest travel site\*\*” that advises “millions of travelers...reaching 390 million average monthly unique visitors...in 48 markets worldwide.” The TripAdvisor website contains a page discussing the Barbadian education system, schools, and educational facilities that supplies the following information:

*There is technically no "home schooling" in Barbados. By law all children from age 4 should be in a school. There have been exceptions but they are few and far between. Learning for Life is considered a home-school option but not in the true home-school way. Children can take 1 or more classes in an afterschool or in place of school setting.*

The information provided by this TripAdvisor page is inaccurate. For one, the 1997 Barbados Education Act specifies that the compulsory school age is 5 and not 4. Secondly, the statement that “[t]here is technically no ‘homeschooling’ in Barbados”, reveals ignorance about both the lived experiences of Barbados homeschoolers and the practices of the Ministry of Education in supporting homeschooling. In addition, the site contains no references. Further, the history of the article reveals that it was created in 2006, though edited up to October 25, 2009 by various other contributors. The page does not outline the process of homeschooling legally in Barbados but relegates the existence of homeschooling in Barbados to “few” “exceptions”. This information is communicated to millions of global viewers, if the TripAdvisor’s statistics are believable. TripAdvisor’s information denies the legal and actual existence of homeschooling in Barbados and supplies no links to substantiate claims made about homeschooling in Barbados.

The TripAdvisor page makes evident that Web sources on topics such as homeschooling in Barbados may contain inaccurate and outdated information that can misinform citizens, returning residents, visitors, and immigrants to Barbados. Those uninformed about the relevant Barbadian legislation could possibly act on incorrect information that denies them the choice of homeschooling. This is unless the user or seeker of information carefully verifies, evaluates, and checks the source for validity and accuracy. Fortunately, a comment in 2013 by Sara B, in responding to this TripAdvisor page, criticizes the page for being “outdated” and needing to “be removed” as the information “contained within is not accurate or correct.” As such, detailed scrutiny would reveal this information suspect, including reviewing Sara B’s comments on the page.

## **Conclusion and Suggested Steps for Further Research**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is characterized as an era of almost ubiquitous Internet access, where citizens have new expectations for how governments should share and deliver information. It has become fashionable for governments to create websites and maintain webpages to deliver information to citizens over the Internet. One such area of need is for the supply of online government information, services, and curricula to support homeschooling educators in shaping the education of children and youth.

Unfortunately, a search of the literature reveals that several countries have gaps in online government information to support homeschooling, which is an educational practice gaining traction in international scholarship and practice. Despite opportunities to use the Internet for e-learning, the literature indicates that many nation states struggle with legally accommodating homeschooling. Within the English-speaking Caribbean, the researcher found no research on homeschooling despite high profile cases in the media about homeschooling controversies.

Barbados represents one of the English-speaking Caribbean states best positioned to support homeschooling education with online government information. It boasts a high Internet connected population online that is a favourable precondition for adoption of e-government services as well high rankings for its development of e-government services. However, the findings indicate that there is inadequate homeschooling information supplied online by the Barbados Government. Beyond querying homeschooling legislation on the rights of parents to homeschool in Barbados, insufficient government disseminated information is available on the Internet to meet information needs about the national process and satisfactory standards of homeschooling. Relevant Government sources are unavailable on official Internet communication channels including Websites and social media pages. The findings reveal gaps in Barbadian government information availability and dissemination via Internet on homeschooling that restrict citizens from access to legal homeschooling.

Gaps in government provided information are filled by non-government providers including those that provide inaccurate information to the public. These include providers such as individual citizens that create the publicly available online sources. Some, like Bajan Mom, supply information in social media sources such as blogs or in commercially driven webpages, as is the case with TripAdvisor. While Bajan Mom disseminates accurate information, others like Trip Advisor disseminate inaccurate and misleading information about legal homeschooling. In this online environment, where individuals can readily disseminate fake news and create satirical news, there is need for government to establish a presence and supply credible online information. As such, the researcher supports the call by various researchers for detailed government information online for homeschoolers and for government institutions using “the potential of electronic networking to make information and services available to the general public” (Durrant 2). It is also recommended that future research study Barbadian homeschoolers use of the Internet to find information for homeschooling and their views about the availability of and access to government sources.

This study adds to the non-existent literature on Caribbean homeschooling research. While Article 26 of the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights apparently supports parental choice for educating their children (United Nations), governments restricting information on legal homeschooling leave homeschooling parents vulnerable to lawsuits and to misleading inaccurate online content created and shared by other private citizens. It is hoped that this exploratory study will kindle academic discussion on Caribbean homeschooling and inform the supply of publicly available online support for legal homeschooling. Online government information potentially improves citizen’s knowledge of what their government expects of homeschoolers as well as supply homeschooling students with equitable access to educational curricula as their peers within public and private school.

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## Appendix A

Table 2 Google query results and data sources for analysis

Type of site	Quantity	Short url
<b>Government websites</b>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mes.gov.bb/</li> <li>• www.moe.gov.jm/</li> </ul>
<b>Personal blog</b>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://bajanmom.wordpress.com/2014/.../ask-bajan-mom-home-schooling-in-barbad...">bajanmom.wordpress.com/2014/.../ask-bajan-mom-home-schooling-in-barbad...</a></li> </ul>
<b>Social media page of a Barbados homeschooling group</b>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.facebook.com/BarbadosHomeschoolers/">www.facebook.com/BarbadosHomeschoolers/</a></li> </ul>
<b>Website of homeschooling advocacy organization</b>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.hslda.org/hs/international/Barbados/default.asp">www.hslda.org/hs/international/Barbados/default.asp</a></li> </ul>
<b>Commercial website/.org with ads</b>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.tripadvisor.com/Travel-g147262.../Barbados:Caribbean:Education.html">www.tripadvisor.com/Travel-g147262.../Barbados:Caribbean:Education.html</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://www.barbados.org/educate.htm">www.barbados.org/educate.htm</a></li> </ul>
<b>News media website</b>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://ireggaenation.com">ireggaenation.com</a> &gt; News</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.loopnewsbarbados.com/content/how-homeschooling-works-barbados">www.loopnewsbarbados.com/content/how-homeschooling-works-barbados</a></li> </ul>
<b>Online forum</b>	1	<a href="http://britishexpats.com/forum/barbados-109/home-schooling-588170/">britishexpats.com/forum/barbados-109/home-schooling-588170/</a>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>10</u></b>	